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Department for Education

Guidance
Initial teacher training: self-evaluation and improvement planning for providers

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Overview

Self-evaluation and improvement planning work together to support continuous improvement across ITT provision. Ofsted takes into consideration both of these processes as part of its inspection and quality of the leadership and management judgement.

Self-evaluation ITT provision at the end of the year employs examples, evidence and data to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Use the outcomes of your self-evaluation to create an improvement plan for the following year. The impact on trainees (the 'ITT trainees' include teaching trainees, apprentices and those undertaking the non-school based element of the plan) has been.

There is no preferred format for documenting either process. You should use what is most suitable for your organisation, and what will support continuous improvement and the improvement planning outlined in this guidance.

Large and complex providers often produce a self-evaluation and an improvement plan for each phase of their provision. Smaller providers may produce one of each. What is important is that both the self-evaluation and the improvement plan are comprehensive, coherent and fully cross-referenced.

Both self-evaluation and improvement planning are most effective when they are a shared, collaborative process involving all those who work in the partnership. All partners should be familiar with the key findings from self-evaluation and in no doubt about their roles in the implementation of the improvement plan.

Self-evaluation document

Creating an annual self-evaluation document helps you to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your provision.

In your self-evaluation, you should give thought to:

- the impact of provision on trainees
- the reasons for patterns of impact emerging across the partnership
- the leadership and management of the partnership
- the quality of education and training of your provision
- compliance with the relevant criteria:
  - ITT criteria
  - ITT requirements
  - Assessment Only criteria
- curriculum coverage, including the ITT core content framework (ITT CCF)

Impact of provision on trainees

You might analyse:

- how well trainees develop the intended knowledge, skills and behaviours to each assessment point (do they know more and remember more of the ITT curriculum, and can they do more with what they know?)
- how well trainees are prepared to be independent trainers to deliver the 'Teachers' Standards' (and can they?) by the end of their training
- how well trainees are prepared for their first teaching post (or other programme - you may want to refer to the outcomes of your most recent terminal/exit data set and/or the most recent initial teacher training (ITT) census data)
- the employment rates of trainees, including how quickly they progress within their organisations
- the employment rates of those who have completed their training programme successfully - you may wish to refer to the national and regional terminal/exit data set and/or the ITT census

Undertaking the analysis of impact data

The outcomes of your analysis of impact data will help you to interrupt your provision to identify strengths and weaknesses for the current year and for the future.

You can analyse the assessment of impact during the year may lead to immediate changes to provision, and the outcomes of your end of year analysis of impact of employment rates at the end of the year may lead you to examine your provision more in the medium term. Your self-evaluation should identify weaknesses that you will address in your improvement plan for the following year.

It can be helpful to examine the impact data for different sub-groups of trainees, for example, by age, ethnicity, sex, disability, and other socially valuable sub-groups. In conducting the impact data, you need to identify the patterns it reveals for each sub-group of trainees as well as for the cohort overall. You should then explore the reasons for those patterns.

Examples of sub-groups may include:

- protected characteristics and characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act (including gender, sexual orientation, age, race, ethnicity, sex, faith, background, disability or special educational needs)
- undergraduate or postgraduate trainees
- trainees training to teach different age ranges
- trainees in specialism sub-groups, including primary subject specialism sub-groups
- degree classification sub-groups (in the case of graduate routes)
- trainees who have or have not been in employment before training
- experienced or inexperienced teaching assistants/teaching assistants
- placement school, school alliance or multi-academy trust sub-groups

Reasons for impact patterns

You can identify the reasons for impact patterns by:

- reviewing both the quality of education and training and the partnership and the quality of the leadership and management of the partnership
- reviewing the outcomes of your most recent Ofsted inspection of initial teacher training (ITT) provision. For example, if your most recent inspection and monitoring quality assurance measures might be the reason why a trainee fails to apply their curriculum knowledge

Significant features of education and training

The significant features of education and training that you might examine when looking for the reasons for any impact patterns include:

- the curriculum coverage, including the ITT core content framework (ITT CCF), and how well it is taught and assessed (including the ITT curriculum, the training curriculum and important training elements and priorities)
- the use of up to date and relevant research
- the curriculum knowledge and expertise of leaders, tutors, mentors and other experts
- the sequencing of the intended curriculum across all settings
- the training of mentors and tutors, including how well they are trained
- the recruitment and selection process
- quality assurance and moderation systems
- the management of workload
- how well equality, inclusion and diversity, secure safeguarding, including safety, and extremism education
- liaison with employers
- how well trainees are being about further improvement
- compliance with the relevant current criteria as set out in:
  - ITT criteria
  - ITT requirements
  - Assessment Only criteria

Evaluation evidence

To evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management you might use the following evidence, and you might also use other evidence:

- data additional to those related to impact, such as data on applications, offers, acceptances and rejections
- data on the quality of the applications by applicants
- records of the interviews
- records demonstrating the expertise of central and school-based experts
- records of the training of those who are involved in the recruitment process
- evaluations by trainees and other experts of the impact of such training on recruitment and selection
- records of the recruitment and selection process, including the data used
- records of the process to plan for the training
- agendas and minutes of the meetings of the project management committee
- records of the internal and external moderation of the assessment of trainees
- evidence of compliance with each of the relevant criteria as set out in:
  - ITT criteria
  - ITT requirements
  - Assessment Only criteria

Significant features of leadership and management

The significant features of leadership and management that you should examine when looking for the reasons for impact patterns include:

- strategic leadership
- the vision for provision, focused on improving or sustaining high quality provision and its impact on trainees
- the quality of the partnership (including settings) partners
- the training of lead mentors and other mentors and how well they are trained
- the recruitment and selection process
- quality assurance and moderation systems
- the management of workload
- how well equality, inclusion and diversity, secure safeguarding, including safety, and extremism education
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Overall effectiveness: strengths and weaknesses

To identify the most significant strengths and weaknesses of your provision, you might:

- work through your self-evaluation document
- list all the reasons, or factors, you have identified to explain both strongs and weaker impact patterns
- in the case of both strongs and weaker impacts, group these factors into common themes
- consider identifying the most significant common themes or factors to address
- summarise the significant strengths in your provision to be maintained and developed
- consider all significant weaknesses you have identified as priorities for the improvement priorities for the following year
- consider the actions you wish to commence into your improvement plan for the following year

Involving your wider partnership

You can involve your wider partnership in conducting self-evaluation by:

- asking partnership committees to review, and giving them the opportunity to comment on, the draft self-evaluation document

You can make sure your wider partnership is familiar with the final version of the self-evaluation by:

- circulating a short summary of the self-evaluation
- including the self-evaluation document in a dedicated area to each partner school
- discussing the short summary at any mentor or expert training events and relevant management meetings

What the best self-evaluation looks like

The best self-evaluation:

- is fit for purpose
- is based on high expectations
- is based on a wide range of evidence and data to support evaluative judgements, supported by specific examples
- takes full account of the views of a wide range of stakeholders, this range of views is reflected in the self-evaluation
- is written in a style of sentences and paragraphs
- acknowledges both strong and weak impacts on trainees
- enables a partnership to know what it needs to do to improve and to sustain
- focuses on securing the strongest possible impact on trainees' progress, attainment, course completion and employment
- is used to secure effective improvement planning and thus modifications to provision, and to secure the best possible impact on trainees
- is used to benchmark and compare provision and its impact with the rest of the sector

Checking the quality of the self-evaluation

To help you check the quality of your completed self-evaluation, consider these questions:

- is any contextual information brief and does it include only contextual information that is relevant to the self-evaluation?
- have I selected the most significant strengths and weaknesses?
- for each aspect of impact, have I examined data for the cohort as a whole and for sub-groups of trainees?
- for each aspect of impact, have I noted the patterns in the data over time?
- have I evaluated all aspects of the provision to work out the reasons for each impact pattern?
- did I draw on full range of evidence to support my judgements?
- does my evaluation make clear the reasons for the impact patterns I have identified?
- do I employ examples, evidence and data to corroborate my judgements?
- do I use specific examples to illustrate my judgements, rather than generalisations?
- do the strengths and weaknesses I have listed derive directly from my self-evaluation?
- have I been into account any recommendations from Ofsted and any other external advice?

Creating your improvement plan

Creating an improvement plan that addresses weaknesses and sharpens strengths in your provision will help to strengthen the impact on trainees.

An improvement plan is:

- a working document designed to secure improvements in provision, which will strengthen the impact of education and training and leadership and management on trainees' progress and outcomes
- based on the priorities identified in the self-evaluation document at the end of the previous year
- a document that is subject to frequent revision during the year

Providers may choose to include other priorities in their improvement plan. Any of these aspirations can be effective:

- a yearly using the improvement plan to focus on a particular area for each cohort
- a focus on the proportion of each cohort which will be addressed, giving attention to the SEND requirements of trainees
- a combination of prose and matrix, giving attention to all the improvement plan features

Improvement plan features

You might find it includes the following in your improvement plan:

- priorities for improvement
- the actions you will take and who will take to address each priority
- dates when actions will be completed
- details of who is responsible for actions
- the resource demands for each priority
- impact criteria
- a schedule for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the implementation of the planning for
- analysis of the effectiveness of the actions taken to secure improvements, and their impact
- details of the outcomes of each review and consequent adjustments to the plan

Improvement priorities

Your priorities for improvement should arise directly from the summary of your self-evaluation. Your priorities for improvement should be those that will transfer or significant weaknesses into strengths and significant strengths you wish to enhance, from the self-evaluation into the improvement plan.

Addressing priorities

To address each priority, you should:

- read through your self-evaluation
- revisit the reasons, or factors, you have identified with respect the impact of provision on trainees, and the leadership and management of the partnership
- identify a sequence of actions that will enable you to address each factor
- list each action precisely
- avoid using terms, such as 'ensure', 'encourage' or 'continue to', instead set out the precise action you will take
- remember that one single action or actions supports effective monitoring

Responsibility for actions

You should:

- work out who is best placed to secure the actions you have identified, taking into account their expertise, capacity and their sphere of influence
- set out who is responsible for each sequence of actions, as well as for each separate action
- make sure the person responsible for any action is also responsible for securing the impact of that action

Resource demands

Resource demands can be money, materials, or fees. You should:

- work out whether cash flow is an extra cost or whether the task is part of agreed responsibilities
- identify the financial cost of resource demands
- make sure you allocate funds for each action or sequence of actions, and work within your budget

Impact criteria

You should:

- identify impact criteria that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timed (SMART) for each action
- ensure that all impact criteria are focused on the specific impact your sequence of actions is designed to achieve
- consider identifying intermediate impact criteria to enable you to track improvement actions are having the intended impacts during the year, or even during the year, as the sequence of actions is carried out, rather than at the end
- not express impact criteria as completion actions or subjective judgements

Monitoring

To monitor the implementation of your improvement plan, you should:

- devise processes that allow you to check that the actions set out in the improvement plan are being implemented, and that they are having impact
- state who will undertake these checks, when, what evidence they will use, how they will record their findings and how you will use their findings

Evaluation

To evaluate the quality of the implementation of your improvement plan, you should:

- devise processes that allow you to judge how well the actions set out in the improvement plan are being implemented, these processes might include engagement of any partnership committee, as well as the external moderation of the assessment of trainees
- make clear who will undertake the evaluation and when, and evidence they will employ, how they will record their findings and how you will use their findings

Review

To review the impact of the implementation of your improvement plan, you should:

- devise processes that allow you to take regular stock over the year, of how far you have met your intended criteria
- make sure that dates of reviews take account of the dates of the assessment of impact, and of the dates of the partnership committee, and of the dates of any external moderation of the assessment
- compile a brief but precise summary of how far you have met your impact criteria, and what you have learned from the review
- identify and list any necessary adjustments to your improvement plan after each review
- make sure that the management group (or other relevant group or committee) reviews the improvement plan and the consequent changes you are making to it

Involving your wider partnership

When compiling your improvement plan, you should involve your wider partnership by:

- asking your partnership committees (or other relevant committees) to review, and give their comments on, the plan
- including drafts of the improvement plan in your school and school support infrastructure, or other setting, requesting comments

You should make sure that the wider partnership is aware of the final version of the improvement plan by:

- making sure the improvement plan identifies the responsibilities of all partners, including
- making sure all partners are aware of their role in implementing the improvement plan
- circulating short summaries of the improvement plan to all partners
- updating the summary after each review
- giving attention to the consequences and to updating during quality visits to each setting

You can involve the improvement group and its updating of mentor or expert training events and relevant management committee meetings (or other relevant committees) meetings

Checking the quality of the improvement plan

To help you check the quality of your completed improvement plan, you can ask yourself the following questions:

- have I considered improvement priorities directly from my self-evaluation document?
- have I identified sequences of actions to address each factor contributing to each weakness?
- is each individual action clear?
- is each action identified as a specific activity?
- does each action have a clear sequence of actions and each separate action?
- are costs documented?
- are impact criteria expressed as measurable impacts?
- are processes for monitoring the implementation of the improvement plan clear?
- are processes for evaluating the implementation of the improvement plan clear?
- are processes for reviewing the impact of the plan and adjusting its actions clear?
- was the wider partnership involved in the development of the improvement plan?
- did wider partnership engagement in the implementation of the improvement plan?

Contact

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If you require further guidance regarding self-evaluation and improvement planning for your ITT provision, please contact:

> **Initial teacher training market regulation team**
> Email
> itt.accreditation@education.gov.uk
>
> This email address is for potential new and accredited ITT providers. If you're a potential candidate, wishing to gain qualified teacher status (QTS), visit Get into Teaching at https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/explore-my-options/teacher-training-routes/specialist-training-options.

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